

Licensed gaming finds a way

Written by dreamkatcha. Any related videos, as always, can be found on my YouTube channel.

None of this would have been possible without the fantastic resources generously provided by immensely talented emulator authors, and communities such as Hall of Light, Lemon Amiga, Lemon 64, World of Spectrum, Moby Games, World of Longplays and Recorded Amiga Games. Thank you for your tireless dedication to preserving the history of gaming.

Up until that merciful iceberg drowned Leo DeCaprio in 1997, shattering cinema attendance records by becoming the first movie to gross over \$1 billion, Jurassic Park was the highest-earning celluloid production of all time.

Evolving from a still lavish budget of \$63m it earnt \$914m worldwide to become the 22nd highest-grossing blockbuster ever. Given that Jurassic Park duly won three Academy Awards, a BAFTA, Award for the Public's Favourite Film, Hugo Award, Saturn Award, People's Choice Award, Young Artist Awards, Outstanding Action/Adventure Family Motion Picture award, Bambi Award (and a slew of other obscure ones I can't be bothered itemising because I'm already gasping for breath), it's safe to say Steven Spielberg's dinosaur disaster-slasher movie was somewhat of a success, and thus ripe for an inevitable gaming spin-off... or 34.

I don't have the patience, or sufficient years left to live, to list the myriad of merchandising tie-ins, DinoRoars, 'build your own dinosaur model' serialised magazines, novel, movie and gaming sequels, comic books, and Universal Studios rides that subsequently gushed forth from the cash-cow franchise that knows no bounds. In an especially cognisant moment, Donald Gennaro put it best when he predicted, "And we can charge anything we want, 2,000 a day, 10,000 a day, and people will pay it. And then there's the merchandise..."

Of course the playable gaming spin-offs *we're* interested in are the originals developed by Ocean for the SNES, NES, PC and Amiga. In a £1m+ (advance alone) deal brokered by Ocean's software development director, Gary Bracey, a team of more people than I have fingers on which to count set about translating the blockbuster movie to kid's bedrooms around the globe. Like John Hammond they "spared no expense".



Design: Warren Lancashire, Matthew Wood

Coders: Andy Miah, Robert Walker, Leslie Long, David Chiles

Graphics: Matthew Wood, Julian Holtom, Warren Lancashire, Colin Rushby, Jack Wikeley, Bill Harbison, Ilyas Kaduki, Ray Coffey

Musician: Dean Evans

All things considered, it went rather well, engendering experiences still treasured twenty-four years later.

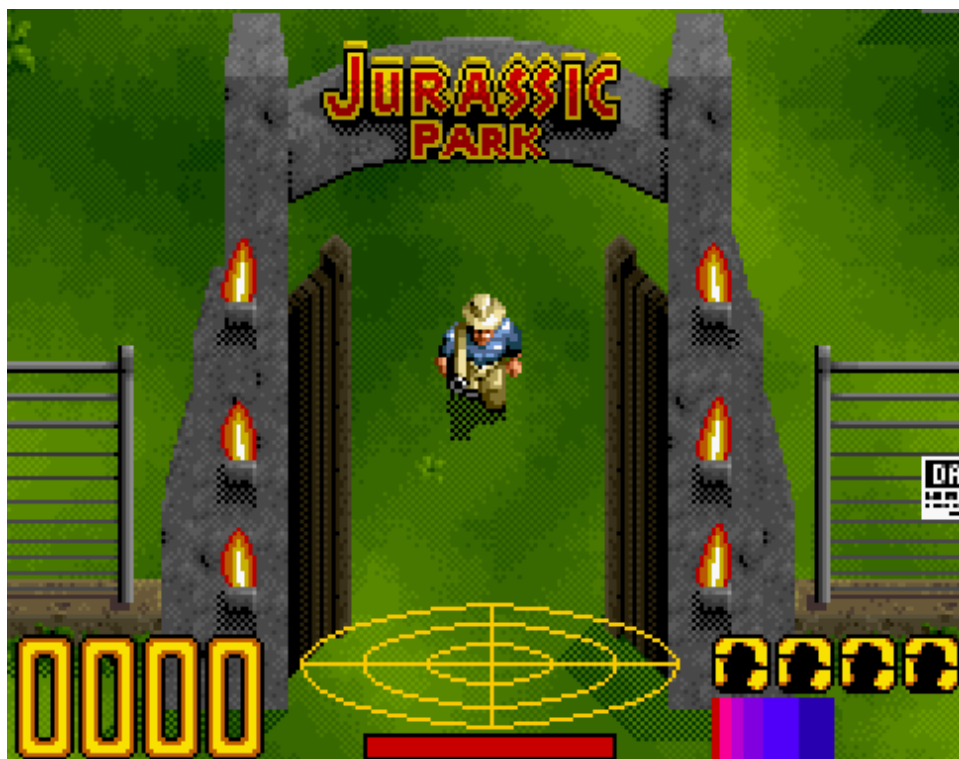
"I'm pleased to report that JP is a bit of a corker. If you like dinos, the movie or simply a good game, you'll love this."

89% - The One (October 1993)

Gary Bracey cites bringing Jurassic Park to life on the small screen as one of his fondest memories of working for Ocean Software. And for reasons unconnected to it hitting the number three spot in the Amiga sales charts in September 1994 (as recorded in Amiga Action issue 61), and sixth position in the SNES charts in February 1994 (SNES Power Charts volume 57); that news had yet to break by this stage.

"Another one was going to Stan Winston Studios for Jurassic Park and watching Phil Tippett create dinosaurs on a silicon graphics machine, which I'd never seen before. These were extraordinary milestones in technology and film. I used to go to Universal Pictures a lot and the offices were just next to the Studios, so when I'd finish I would go out the back door and spend the rest of the day going on the rollercoasters in my suit (laughs). But probably the biggest thing was going to Amblin Entertainment and having a one-to-one meeting with Steven Spielberg to brainstorm concepts for the Jurassic Park game. That was pretty spectacular."

Gary Bracey (GamesTM interview, issue 139)



Released in October 1993 following 16 years worth of *cumulative* developer investment, as it allows you to walk amongst and poke dinosaurs thought to have become extinct 65 million years ago, it almost didn't matter whether it was any good or not. Such was (and still *is*) the perennial popularity of dinomania, not least evidenced by the success of the bizarre - yet award-winning - slapstick puppetry 'Dinosaurs' TV show that was airing at the time. Nevertheless, luckily for us Ocean's pixelated rendition of Jurassic Park didn't coast into the Gallup sales charts riding on the wave of its lucrative license alone.

Development began on the OCS/ECS Amiga edition in November 1992, though was immediately switched to the enhanced AGA Amiga 1200 platform when the SDK became available. This meant that while the A1200 version was released in October of 1993, A500/600 owners had to wait until January the following year to land their prehistoric fix. SNES, NES, Game Boy and DOS interpretations emerged

alongside that of the inaugural Amiga release, largely based on the same premise and mechanics, although collecting dinosaur eggs in the Nintendo games is a preoccupation that doesn't factor into the equation elsewhere.



Even the standard Amiga edition with its diluted 32 colour palette looks superb, the enhanced 128 colour AGA and DOS versions building upon this solid foundation. Every design choice evokes fond memories of the seismic event that was seeing the movie in the theatre for the first time as a wide-eyed, naive child.

Animation is immaculately intricate, as life-like as a '90s tech pixel art game could hope to be, while several neat graphical touches raise the bar out of reach of some of the competition. That you can walk behind objects such as trees and shrubs and still see your sprite through the gaps in the foliage is particularly striking, for instance. Overall the impression you're left with is one of subtle finesse.

Spielberg's dinosaurs on which the wildlife in Ocean's action-adventure were based are a blend of CGI courtesy of Industrial Light & Magic, employed for the high velocity, distant scenes, and animatronics devised by special effects guru, Stan Winston, for the close-ups. "No, no, no. We have no animatronics here. These are the real miracle workers of Jurassic Park.", shamelessly lies John Hammond.

Working together in perfect synergy they conjure a convincing simulation of organic motion, as does Ocean's own technical and artistic wizardry, obviously to a less spectacular degree given the limitations with which they had to operate.

Gawping, mesmerised by the phenomenal, otherworldly feat at the cinema, it's difficult to imagine how the same sense of magical wonder could have been invoked had the original plan - to engage stop-motion animation - gone ahead. Attempt to compile a list of the most pivotal moments in special effects evolution and this will be right up there vying for the number one slot.



Split between isometric, overhead exploration style gameplay (including Toobin' esque plesiosaur-swerving rafting!) similar to Zelda or Chaos Engine and 3D first-person perspective segments, the game is a radical departure from Ocean's tried and tested sub-game montage fare.



Gary Bracey was in no doubt that this was to be their most prodigious license, and the one with the most manpower allocated to it to date, and so the quality of their oeuvre had to strive to match the high water mark set by the ground-breaking overnight hit silver screen analogue.

Clearly in his element straddling the two complementary worlds of Hollywood and gaming, Gary exalted, "This is Jaws with dinosaurs. This isn't just a film any more - it's an event. It's got everything going for it; it's a thumping good story, it's got Steven Spielberg involved but, best of all, it's about dinosaurs, which is something kids have been into for 65 million years!"

Reading in retrospect his anticipation of the game's potential magnitude you get the sense of apprehension he must have felt approaching the challenge of doing justice to the cherished, undying franchise that earned its director a staggering \$250m.

"Spielberg is a games fanatic himself and has a hands-on involvement to ensure that the final result is as faithful as possible to his original idea. He would not allow any Mario-type figure to start jumping all over his dinosaurs!"

Ironically, it transpired that the contrasting SEGA Mega Drive version produced by BlueSky Software is much more in line with the kind of mistake from which Gary sought to distance himself... with broken physics chucked in for good measure.



It's a 2D platform (and dinghy) game in which you play either a digitised manifestation of a BlueSky developer posing as Dr Alan Grant, or one of the main villains of the piece, a Velociraptor! This protagonist-antagonist dichotomy was a first for movie-based video games.

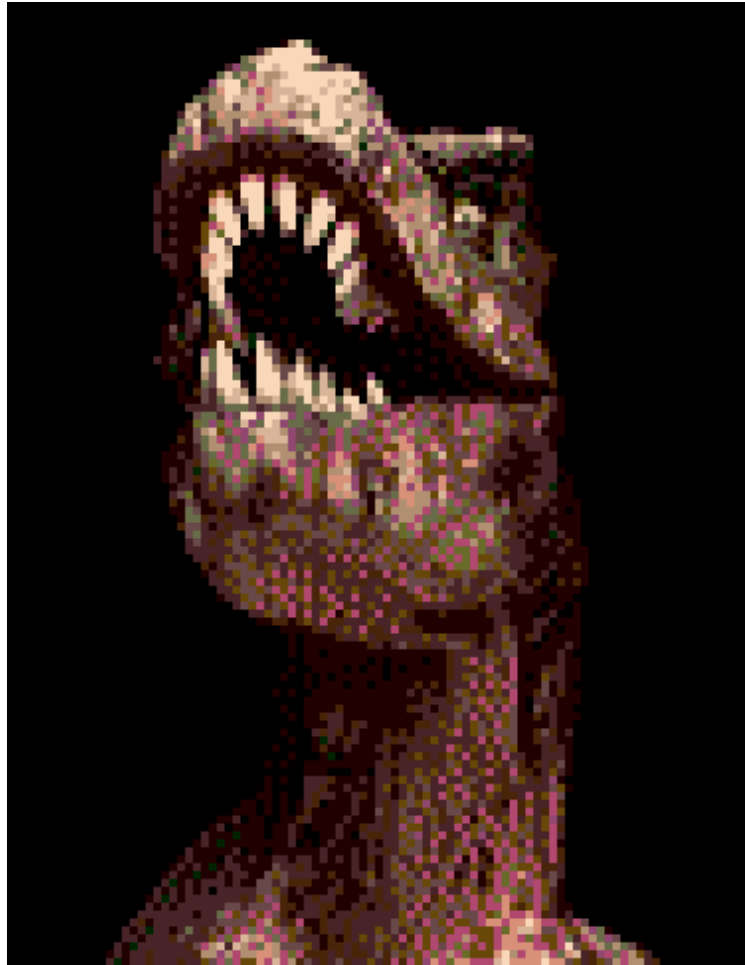




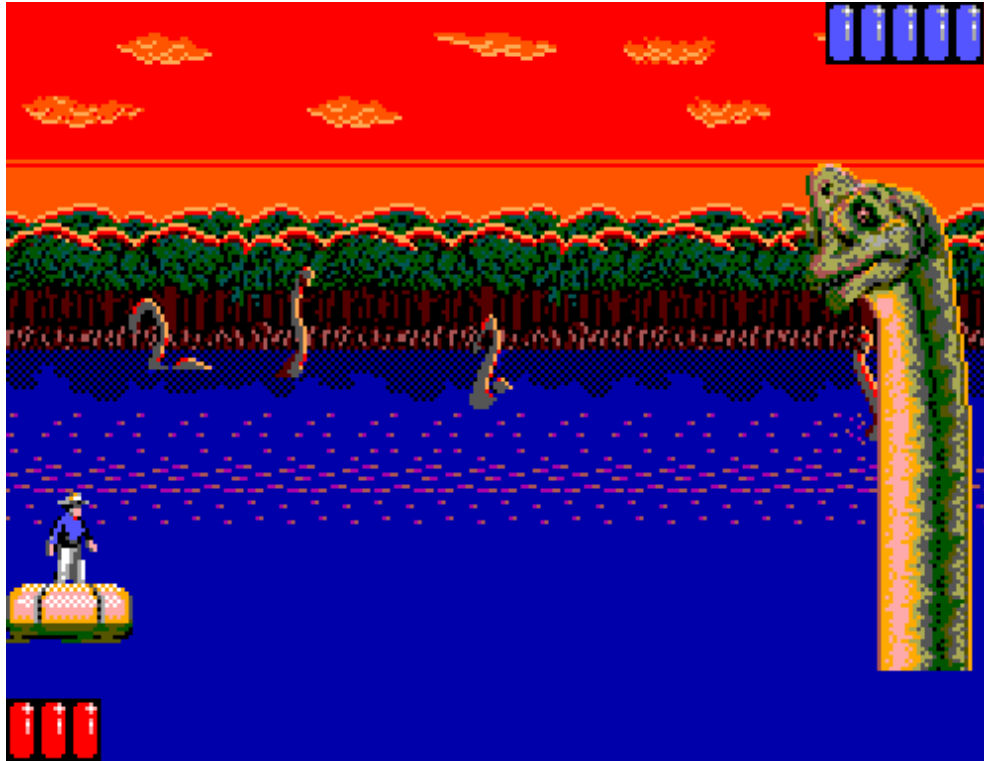
Bizarrely it's a 'stun 'em up' in that you can't kill your assailants, only temporarily incapacitate them. I can't imagine why the welfare of the dinosaurs would be the top priority when all *they're* concerned with is outing your innards.



Embodying the undead fossil it's your goal to get off the island to find a safe place to lay your eggs, the humans serving as bothersome obstacles hindering your capacity to achieve this. As such you'll need to rip them to shreds before they gun you down in a desperate scramble to save their own hides. In a twist that I believe isn't strictly cannon - paleontologically speaking - the game opens with a T-rex roaring the word 'SEGA' in lieu of the usual high-pitched vocal inextricably linked to the Japanese console giant.



Game Gear and Master System fans weren't forsaken either; their offering is an all-2D endeavour developed and published by SEGA themselves. Its chief programmer was 'ToToYo'. I don't have any sort of salient point to make, I just like saying ToToYo. ToToYo. What?



Unravelling across five stages it comprises traditional platforming segues, and 'on rails', side-scrolling driving segments, viewed from the perspective of an unseen vehicle. In the latter, you're invited to take pot-shots at marauding dinosaurs, aiming your gun with a cross-hair a la Operation Wolf to protect a speeding jeep.



Despite the degree of wildlife terrorism entailed, your goal is actually to *recapture* a specific species of dinosaur on each level, all of which culminates in a boss battle. You can consider it an exercise in eco-friendly dinocide, if you like. Naturally, the T-rex is your lattermost nemesis... because he'll scoff all the Chewitts if he's not stopped in his tracks.



Unlike the Amiga version this was unlikely to disturb the boundaries of the system's capabilities; one reason Ocean's game was widely previewed, reviewed and fed into the industrial-grade hype machine at the time.

PC gamers had experienced (and lapped up) Wolfenstein 3D by this stage, and Doom was right around the next corner, yet on the Amiga side of the equation, there was really nothing to rival the thrill of FPS-ing the guts out of fully fleshed out, realistic assailants. Gloom (depicted below) and Alien Breed 3D wouldn't claw their way out from the primordial soup until 1995.



Substitutional parallels were drawn between Legends of Valour, Ultima Underworlds and Dungeon Master (in the SNES previews) both by the critics and JP developers themselves. Andrew Miah for instance proudly proclaimed, "The 3D is unlike anything seen on the Amiga before. The graphics window is about three or four times bigger than Legends of Valour's and running twice as fast".

"Nobody's done anything with this amount of detail at this speed, and I'd say it's comparable to a 386 PC, or a slow 486 machine, even."

Colin Gordon, project manager

On the A1200, the top-down sections Matt Wood likens to Bitmap Brother's Cadaver run at 25fps, while the 3D

interludes viewed through a tiny rectangular window (in contrast to the night vision goggles found in the SNES version) are fully texture-mapped. A cunning and novel - for the time - technique achieved by overlaying vector graphics with high-resolution bitmaps.

"The 3D sections take place in the control centre, the visitors' centre and other outdoor locations. In these bits, the computer system goes wrong and you have to get to it, turn it off and turn it back on again - just like in the film."

Colin Gordon, project manager

This is the architecture of the game that was thoroughly previewed several months prior to its unleashing, as well as the one we know today as Ocean's contribution to dino-lore. Even so, the outcome could easily have swung in an entirely different direction. Ocean experimented with three or four diverse designs, some correlating with the typical multi-game licensed menageries we had come to expect from the prolific outfit, before settling upon the 'The Doom Engine' unravelled here.

"We first saw The Chaos Engine when we were part of the way through coding Jurassic Park and thought 'Oh dear, it's going to look the same' but it *does* look a lot different when you see it moving."

Matt Wood, co-designer and graphic artist

3D intermissions occupy roughly 50% of the gameplay time, though largely occur towards the culminating stages. In comparison to Doom - which it should be noted was released two months *after* JP - they're clunky and primitive; not nearly enough to impede the exodus of gamers to the PC that began at this juncture. More of an amuse-bouche to whet the

appetite ahead of the bountiful, dedicated first-person shooters that would follow in due course... albeit mostly on more capable platforms. Unless of course, you had the financial resources of Scrooge McDuck, and thus were the proud owner of an A4000 with an accelerator card.



"At that time we'd seen some early demos of Doom and we wanted to get that 3D FPS into the game. I mean, with dinosaurs that would be fantastic!"

Gary Bracy (Ocean Software: Retro Gamer Signature Collection)



A fair bit of imagination and research was devoted to the project with the result hatching as an accomplished hybrid of the movie and Michael Crichton's 1990 novel, as well as some original inventions of their own to augment the sensation of abiding peril.



To this effect, the game's pterodactyl dome and rafting episodes only make an appearance in the book, not the abridged tale as told by the motion picture. Had the movie

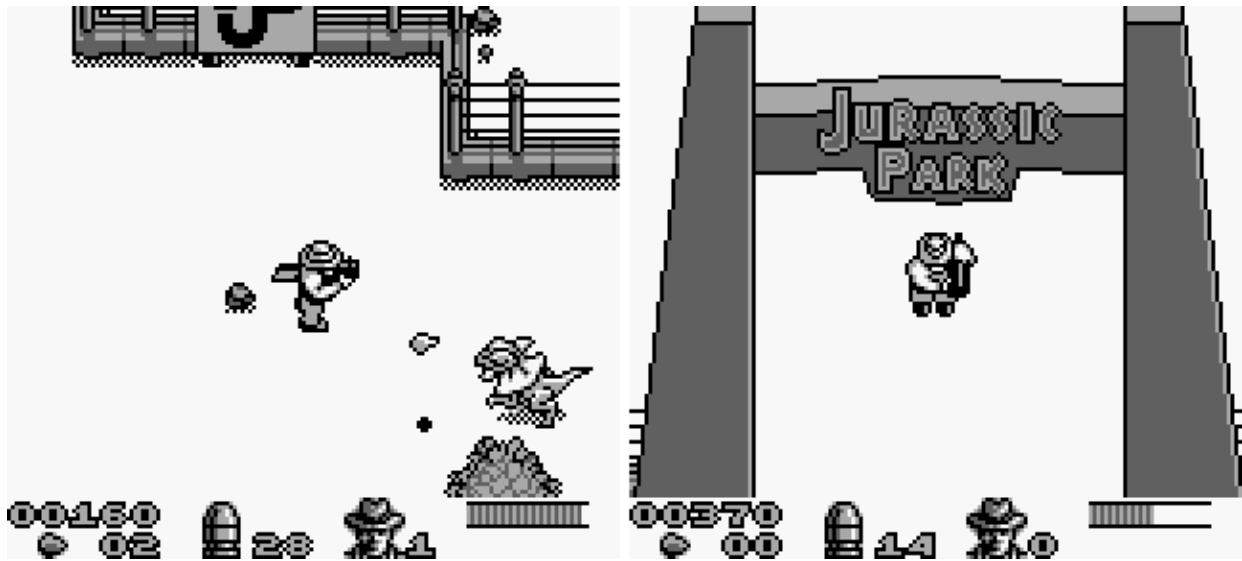
been a verbatim facsimile it would likely have received an 18 certificate judging by the unfettered incidences of mutilation and disembowelment found in the literary source material. It wasn't, and it was classified suitable for 13-year-old children under Parental Guidance. Likewise, the game was intended to be family-friendly fodder, and therefore had to be toned down.



"Yes, we've followed the plot of the movie closely, although we've had to make a few adjustments. In the film there are about nine or ten dinosaurs, of which only three or four are a threat, so we've had to think about how we can make some of the dinosaurs dangerous. For example, we've got one part where a Stegasaurus is banging its tail against a bank, causing a rockslide which you have to avoid. We've also got a lot of 'Compies', which are small carrion eaters that follow you around everywhere. They aren't in the film, though they were in the book."

Colin Gordon, project manager

In-house development was the order of the day for the Amiga iterations, whilst work on their console counterparts was shipped out to Ocean's new San Jose office in the US headed by software manager, Mark Rogers. To ensure his team were able to capture the atmosphere and sentiment of the then pre-production stage movie, they visited the set, perused the storyboards and stills, and devoured the novel on which it was founded.



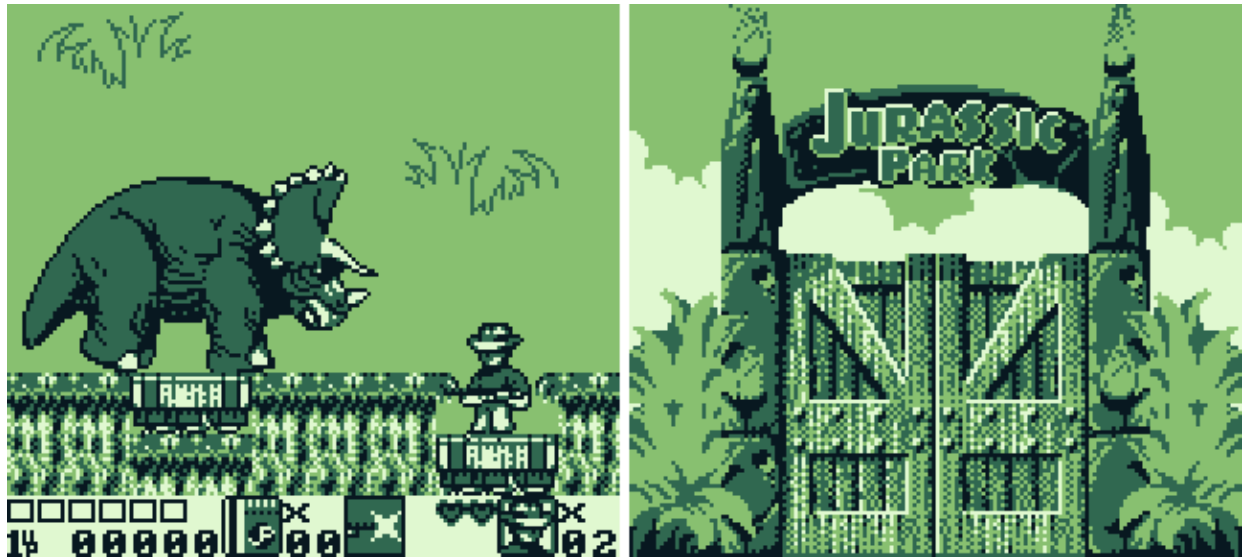
If you interpret the SNES outing as a tweaked upgrade to our home-grown Amiga iteration, the corresponding cartoonishly rendered Game Boy and NES titles are fundamentally *demakes*.



They encompass six levels of top-down exploration style gameplay revolving around dino egg foraging, terminal screen twiddling, and power restoring shenanigans. Given that the SNES's DSP chip struggled to maintain the pace, obviously the internal 3D forays were vetoed from the blueprint. Like the SNES version, saving isn't an option.



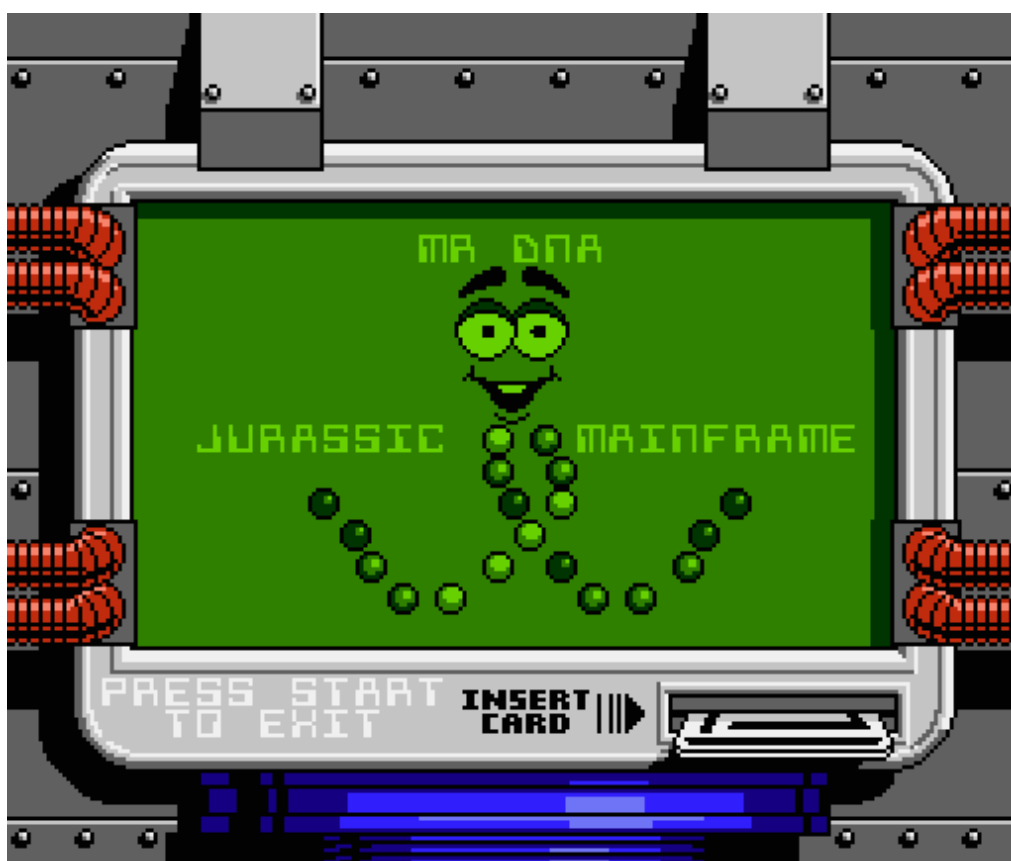
If you've played Comic Bakery for the Commodore 64 you may recognise the remixed overhaul of Martin Galway's chip-tune soundtrack. Furthermore, the same tune makes a reappearance in Jurassic Park 2: The Chaos Continues for the Game Boy, also by Jonathan Dunn. Comic Bakery was developed by Imagine who were absorbed into Ocean when they ran aground, so copyright issues are unlikely to have been a concern.



You may like to seek out the AVGN review of NES-JP. James was especially disturbed by the mystery power-up boxes that can variously help or harm you, yet are all branded with an enigmatic question mark. By 'harm' I mean instantly *extinctify* you.



Oh, and the camouflaged doors that don't look enough like doors, and pass through them to reach somewhere you're not. He didn't like that bit much either. Or the steep difficulty curve, and all that excessive computer terminal malarkey. I don't think he's a fan, in general, to be fair.



Ocean UK's involvement in the development of the Nintendo games was very hands-off as they had their own schedule milestones to meet. Regrettably, this resulted in a preview of the SNES game sporting early, sub-par graphics being revealed to the press at the Chicago Consumer Electronics Show.

Thankfully, saving the day, these were switched in time for the release of the finished article, even comprising "high-resolution backdrops"; a technical first apparently. Had the

two-months-in 'test graphics' been left in situ, the game may not have passed Nintendo's stringent approval process; a stipulation that need not have troubled 'anything goes' Amiga developers. Nintendo were responsible for manufacturing the cartridges as well as shipping them back to Ocean, so they had to be confident that their name wasn't being associated with an inferior product. That was never Commodore's 'bag', so to speak.



Aurally the game excels what with its racing heartbeat, authentic dinosaur sound effects and stirring, ambient soundtrack. It's suitably unnerving, bursting with foreboding

intrigue and intrepidation, not least bolstered by the provision of the movie's genuine DATs (Sony's proprietary Digital Audio Tape format), that meant cinematic grade audio effects could be *inserted* rather than composed. These were deemed so spine-chillingly realistic Nintendo requested that Ocean tone down the bone-crunching sound effect emitted when you're eaten by a T-rex! Jonathan Dunn composed the music for the Nintendo versions, which should tell you everything you need to know about its quality, and if that sounds remotely sarcastic, you can't be familiar with his work.

An attempt at recreating John Williams' timeless, electrifying original score would have been the chocolate-coated cherry on the Brontosaurus pie ...that's surely a phrase? I suppose "you can't always get what you want, but if you try sometime..."

Come on, sing along you there in the cheap seats. You can't go to sleep yet, I'm just getting started.

Although you play the role of Dr Alan Grant, the bird's eye perspective means that we're unable to see if it's Sam Neill under the Stetson Panama fedora, or an anonymous, everyman adventurer. Amiga-Grant lost his headgear somewhere along the way, though you'd still struggle to recognise him in a police lineup. It's a small sprite, it happens. Whaddaya gonna do?

On the contrary, during the FPS scenes, digitised profile pictures accompany the appearances of our colleagues, demonstrating that Ocean's license included permission to use the real star's likenesses. Stars who we were reminded at the time weren't in fact 'A-listers' because Spielberg wanted the dinosaurs to be the allure, "...living biological attractions so astounding that they'll capture the imagination of the entire planet." Mission accomplished!



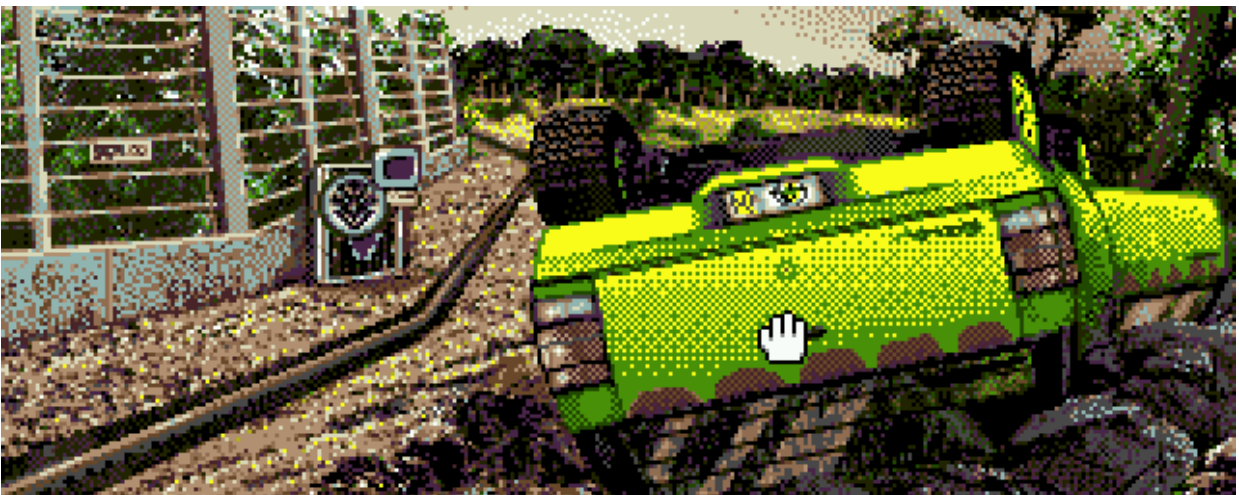
Obviously Sam Neille and Jeff Goldblum, in particular, are household names today, albeit not in the same league as Arnie Schwarzenegger, Sly Stalone or Tom Cruise, for example. Richard Attenborough will always be a legend, just no longer a *living* one sadly. Laura Dern was a tremendously talented actress before becoming Ellie Sattler in Jurassic Park and that hasn't changed since. Then there's Samuel L. Jackson who needs no introduction.



As previously alluded to, the tangential, sludgely controlled Genesis title developed by BlueSky Software and published by SEGA features a Dr Grant surrogate, and none of the supporting homosapien troupe from the movie.



As for the Cinepak FMV, Mega-CD point and click action-adventure title, despite SEGA paying an estimated \$1m for the license, I expect this didn't permit them to assimilate the movie cast. Missing in action as they are.



Notable for embracing the SEGA CD's QSound system, it's another egg-retrieving soiree, this time set after the events of the original movie. Known only as Jurassic Park sans subtitle, the puzzle-combat challenges are presented by Paleontologist Robert T. Bakker and a computer guru called Emily Shimura. They're not even vague look-a-likey approximations of the genuine JP actors, lending the game a cheap, tacky feel as opposed to Ocean's polished presentation.



If you want to discover what truly vague look-a-likey approximations looky likey you'd have to check out 'Jurassic Park Interactive' released the following year for the 3DO, developed by Studio 3DO and published by Universal Interactive Inc. Yes, spot on, the game publishing division of Universal Studios, the distributors behind Jurassic Park.



You play as a park security guard who has to chaperone a throng of tourists to the safety of the helipad... by playing a

selection of half-baked mini-games, two of which rip-off the arcade classics, Space Invaders and Asteroids!



"Yeah, yeah, but your game designers were so preoccupied with whether or not they *could* that they didn't stop to think if they *should*."

Ah, so that's what Ian Malcolm was getting at. It's all clicking into place now. Seriously, enough! I can't take any more of this! Let's hail down the escape chopper and get back to Amiga Island post-haste. Plotwise the game takes its cues from the movie as you'd expect given that this is what Ocean were paying the big bucks for. Deviant, ill-fated programmer, Dennis Nedry (Newman from Seinfeld), has been lured to the dark side by Lew Dodgson, a shady instigator of industrial espionage who has crossed his palm with silver in return for the delivery of a number of frozen dinosaur embryos.



In order to sabotage the work of park owner, billionaire philanthropist John Hammond played by Richard 'Santa Claus' Attenborough, and make a clean getaway with the spoils, Dennis cripples the security system allowing the deadly dinos to break loose from their enclosures to run amok. Strangely enough, we're reminded that "Life breaks free, it expands to new territories and crashes through barriers, painfully, maybe even dangerously, but, uh... well, there it is." It's almost as if reversing irreversible extinction to enable ferocious 40-foot tall dinosaurs to mingle with fragile humans could be foreseen as a bad idea. What a ludicrous concept!



In the midst of these reprehensible shenanigans, Grant is chaperoning John's grandchildren, Lex and Tim ("the human piece of toast"), on a tour of the Costa Rican island's attractions. A Tyrannosaurus rex stalks the party and upends their jeep forcing them to flee in opposite directions, precisely the point at which we join the game. Don't worry, it'll all work out OK, "Just think of it as... kind of a big cow." Oh wait, isn't that the Brachiosaurus? Sorry, my mistake.

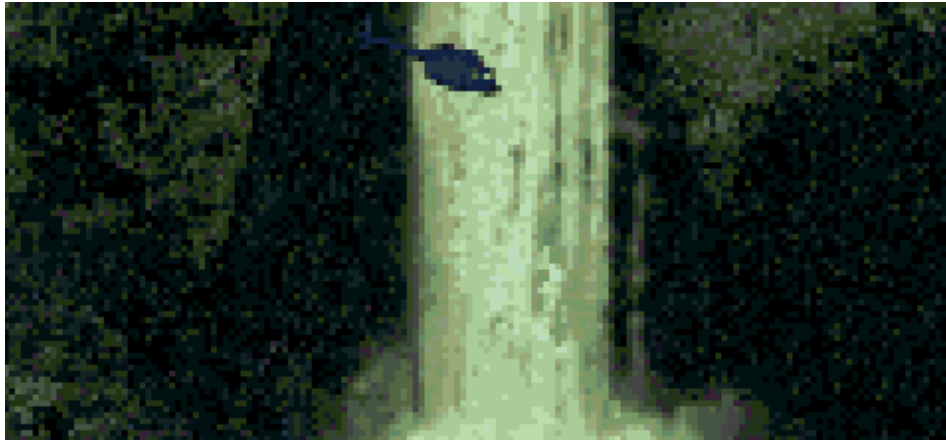


Playing as world-renowned palaeontologist, Dr Alan Grant, it's your mission to track down Lex and Tim, and guide them through the paddocks to the sanctuary of the visitor centre.



With the kids in tow like a ball and chain around your Compsognathus-chewed ankles, you must reactivate the park's security system, radio for helicopter backup and

ultimately escape from the death-trap of an island, ensuring the inhabitants are locked down and unable to follow suit.



"We've tried to retain their characters - for instance, we've got Lex doing stupid and dangerous things like she does in the movie."

Colin Gordon, project manager

Eight enormous maps constitute the slightly off-skew, overhead perspective bulk of the game, wherein you encounter a range of predatory Dinosauria armed at first only with a feeble cattle prod taser stun gun that requires several seconds to recharge after each use. This will kill the mini-beasts outright, though multiple shots are necessary to neuter the more burly reptiles.



A rifle pick-up will provide more range, however, sadly packs an equivalent punch, whereas SNES gamers were treated to a selection of alternative weaponry: a tranquillizer gun, shotgun, bolas, gas grenade launcher, and missile launcher.

Something else to have missed the boat in the Amiga version is the, erm, boat. You know, the one some of the dinosaurs exploit to escape to the mainland in the novel, yet not the movie. A nice touch, though perhaps not enough to justify the cost of the £54.99 SNES cartridge.

"This is not the soul-wracking personal expedition it might have been, but neither is it the quick-hit, assembly-line product we had every reason to expect."

83% - Amiga World (March 1994)

Your first objective is to locate the motion trackers used to keep tabs on the level of dinosaur activity in the vicinity. Attached to these are computer terminals that aside from

providing dino demographics will display a map of the topography, details of your to-do task list and allow you to control the access gate exits.



Entering one of the eleven complexes the view flips into 3D mode where you're obliged to root out one object or another before heading for the exit and back out into the open. If you're familiar with modern FPS games, the first thing you'll notice is the diminutive playfield, implemented to ensure a practical frame rate could be maintained; often a necessary evil back then.



Inside the bunkers is no safer than anywhere else seeing as these erstwhile havens of harmony have been infiltrated by rampaging carnivores baying for gooey human innards. Then again, given that the AI falls well short of Doom-grade repute, you might like to retreat indoors if only to get your breath back for a while.



On the positive front, surprisingly you have the ability to strafe left and right as well as call up a map of previously visited areas; virtues you wouldn't necessarily associate with such an early Amiga FPS.

"You know already, but the graphics and the sound are the computer game equivalent of heroic Greek sculptures. The 3D sections are genuinely scary and not to be taken too lightly. Overwhelmingly the gameplay is the downer. It is paltry and mind-locking. This could have been a smash of overwhelming proportions. Unfortunately, well, fill the rest in yourself..."

71% - Amiga Power (January 1994)

Each sector focuses on a different dinosaur paddock or fortification, and a separate goal. In one the aim is to get the power generator back online to facilitate free movement throughout the park, enabling you to guide the "Smaller versions of adults, honey" to safety.



To complete another you must slip into a drainage pipe, granting access to the slimy, crocodile and pterodactyl infested sewers beneath the tropical paradise. Here you need to push a floating wooden box until you locate Lex, and deploy it as a makeshift rescue dinghy, steering her back to the pipe through which you arrived. On the surface, Tim joins the armed rescue party and the three of you exit through a gate in the electrified fence. "You think they'll have that on the tour?"

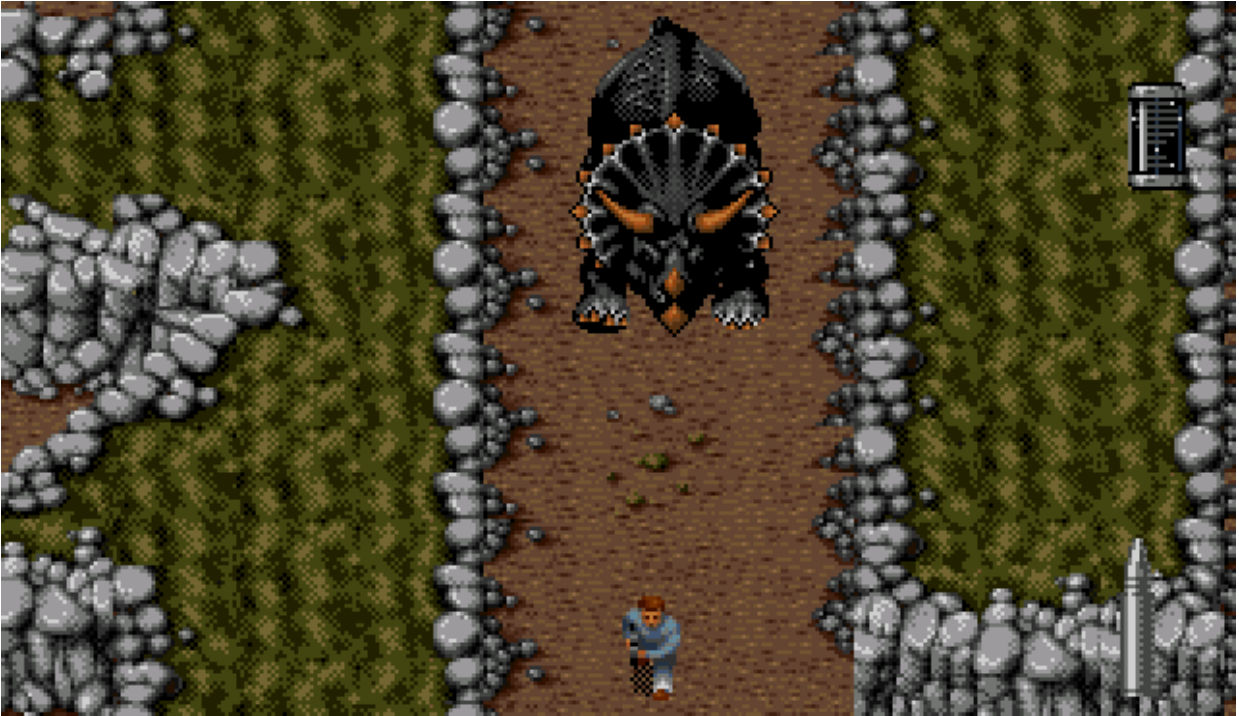


You may think that's it, a job well done, except they only go and wander off, get lost and land themselves in hot water once more. Guess who has to go and rescue them all over again? Yup, that's right, Muggins here. That's *you* in case you were wondering.

If it hadn't been for you meddling kids... still, you wouldn't have got to experience the breathtaking, 'dodge the stampeding theropods' sweeping pan shot vista from the movie if it wasn't for their supreme ineptitude.

"Unfortunately, Jurassic Park suffers from the great looks, huge game but little playability syndrome. So much of your time is spent wandering around that before long you become interminably bored. The levels offer little variety and despite the two distinct styles within the game (overhead and point-of-view perspectives), the lack of real action leaves you somewhat cold. Once you have shot the same type of animal a hundred times you really do not want to see them again. But the Compies (small dog-like creatures that nip you) just keep on hassling you. They are not difficult to kill, just intensely annoying. Those of you who loved the film may glean some satisfaction from exploring the park and killing heaps of animals from a bygone age but I would much prefer a day out at Alton Towers with Beavis and Butthead."

70% - Amiga Format (January 1994)



Hunting berries and cherries forms the basis of the Triceratops paddock level in that the great lummo is blocking a critical pathway and must be distracted with the fruit in order to expedite safe passage through a stone wall you then trick it into ramming into rubble. The more fruit you deposit, the longer he'll be sidetracked. Not the most exciting task for a dino-hunting super-saviour until you reach the denouement.



Nonetheless, you'll appreciate the respite once you progress to the Tyrannosaurus rex evading escapade replete with dramatic, nail-biting acoustics that leave you in doubt as to the answer to the question, Do-you-think-he-saurus?



Surviving this section demands that you distract history's most notorious caveman slayer with flares long enough to gain some ground and break free from his tyranny (*you* supply the pun, this one's too much like low-hanging fruit even for me). Meanwhile, the useless kids who got you into this fine mess in the first place cower out of sight in a bunker. Pfft, typical!



Regardless, it's worth plodding through the berry-plucking interlude just to see the ransacked toilet carcass where slimeball lawyer, Donald Gennaro, was eaten alive by the freshly escaped T-rex in the movie (though *not* the book). "You see a Tyrannosaur doesn't follow a set pattern or park schedules, the essence of chaos."



That and the convalescing Triceratops, demonstrating that the designers did their homework, and went the extra mile to make this a safari expedition of discovery for the fans. I dare you not to smile when you stumble across the infamous zillion foot high park gates. "What have they got in there? King Kong?"





Incidentally, the inspiration for the berry-collecting episode emanates from Crichton's book. In it, he explains that every six weeks Triceratops ingest small stones to aid the digestion of their 'Veggiesaurus' diet. Unfortunately for them, they were prone to accidentally swallowing poisonous West Indian lilac berries as they did so, which would make them sick.



"Solid graphics and two types of gameplay. The action quickly becomes repetitive. There are much better action games out there."

54% - PC Gamer (May 1994)



Traversing the landscape, you'll encounter Gallimimus flocks, poison-secreting Compsognathus, spitting Dilophosaurs, tail-swishing Stegasaurus, "clever girl" Velociraptors, giant dragonflies and T-rex adversaries.



Successfully eschewing their onslaught necessitates the repeated deactivation and reactivation of electric fences, collecting tool kits and security access swipe cards etc. and a

heck of a lot of trekking back and forth through often sparsely populated territory.

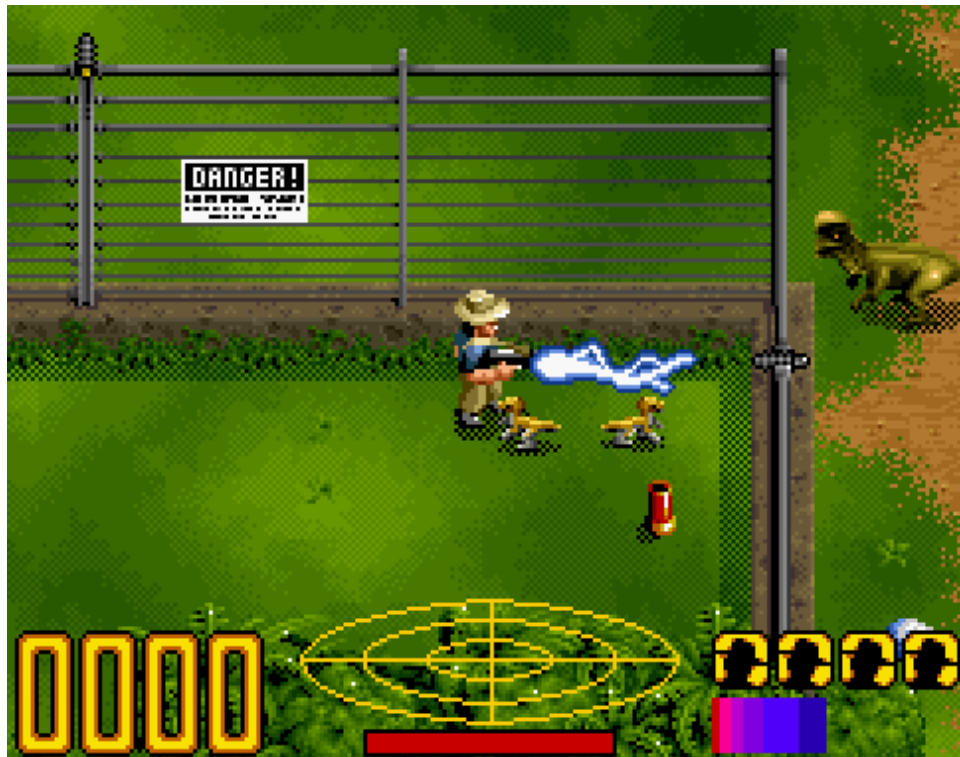




Despite this quickly becoming tedious, the saving grace is that you'll soon come to know the sprawling mazes like the back of your hand, as well as the whereabouts of the respawning collectable weapons, key cards, ammo and medikits that reappear in identical positions.



These are utilised automatically and immediately, eliminating the need for an inventory system that would yolk you out of the immersive action, unlike the oversized pop-up communication boxes that flood the playing area, blocking your view in the partially mouse-driven SNES version.



This and the absence of a game-resuming feature may well explain how 300 copies of the SNES cartridge displayed in a fridge came to be listed on eBay for \$1500 in May 2015... *and* sold. Fridge and Bacardi not included.



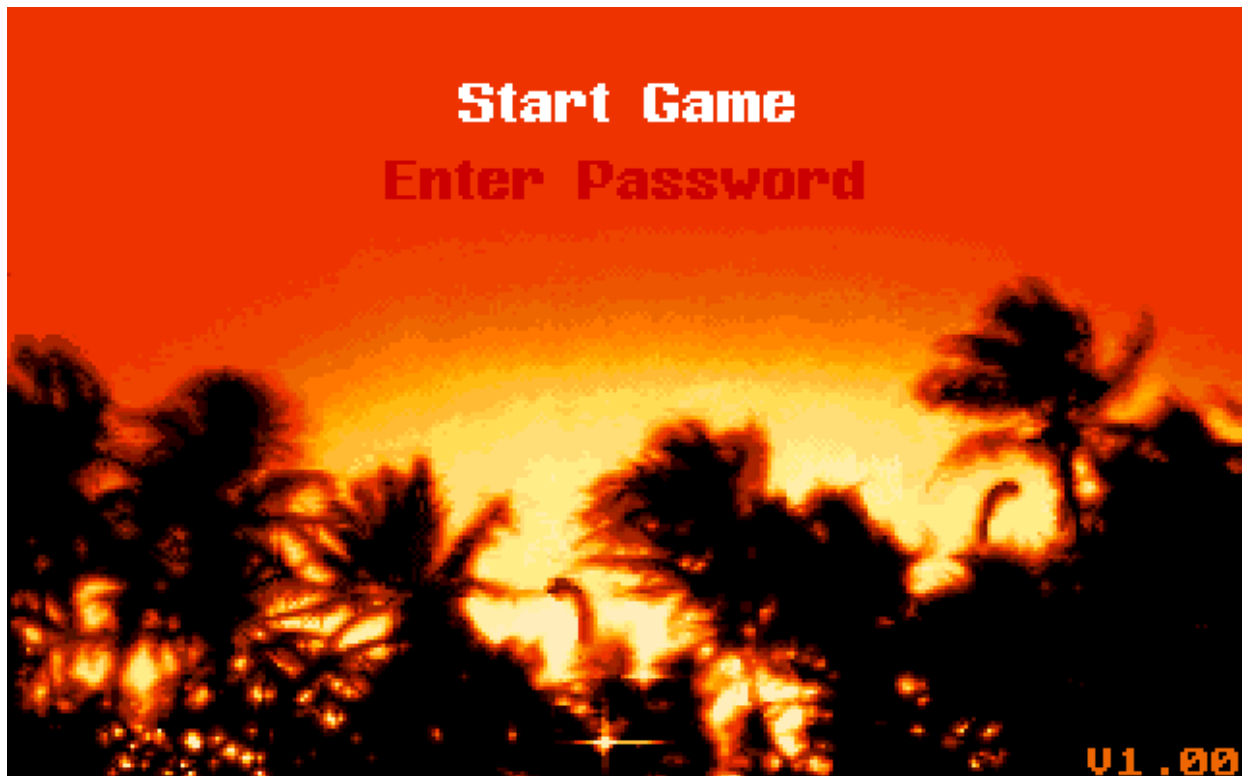
Welcome pick-ups, unfortunately, aren't the only things that respawn; dawdle in the same area too long and you'll soon be overrun with gribbles you thought you'd already dispatched. Obviously then the best approach is to stay on your toes and keep moving at all times, as you would anyway if you were being hounded by ruthless reptilian assassins

with nowhere safe to take cover. That'll be to ratchet up the tension then... irritating, but acutely effective. If it doesn't leave you wondering, "Where's the goat?", you must have nerves of steel. That or you've already abandoned JP to assist 'Doomguy' in banishing the hordes of Hellspawn from whence they came.

"It's amazing that Amblin Entertainment (Stephen Spielberg's company) allowed this game to get out of the door. They wouldn't have released the movie in this shape, it would have gone back to the editing room. The best news is that it got into stores a year after the movie, so most of the excitement (and hopefully the sales) has come and gone. If you're interested in the ultimate dinosaur experience, read Crichton's book, or rent the movie when it comes out on video. You'll do much better."

Computer Gaming World (June 1994)

A password system has been implemented to allow you to teleport between levels - once reached under your own steam - without having to complete the long game in a single sitting. An essential feature that would have made SNES owners green with envy.



What the surround sound, semi-Mode 7 SNES edition lacks in save games, it more than makes up for with jaunty elevator music, and educational dinosaur trivia whenever you pause the action in the external sectors, delivered by the very obliging Mr DNA (who also makes an appearance in the NES iteration). And that's not the only helpful tweak lavished upon privileged console owners: keep your eyes peeled for Dennis popping up from time to time to impart eminently useful advice such as "Touch the fence for a free life".

"Steven Spielberg said he wanted a 'groundbreaking' game. We feel this has been achieved due to the development of the 3D technology in the interior sections. Essentially, we're replicating the effects of the Super FX chip in the standard SNES hardware! Everyone seems to be pretty impressed."

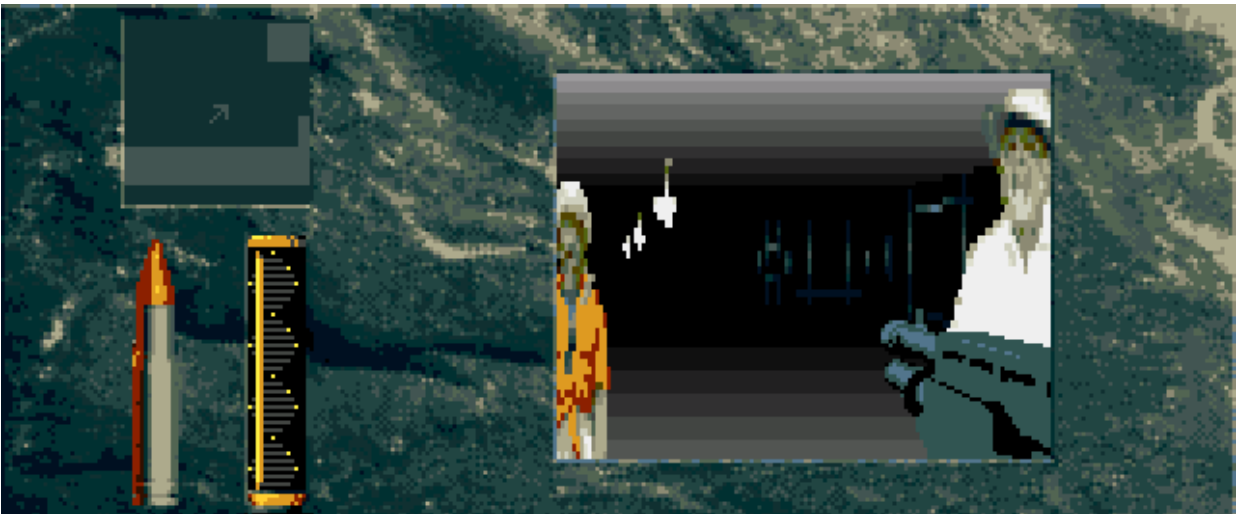
Gary Bracey ('Brace Yourself', SNES Force)



A Dilophosaurus aka the one with the neck frill.

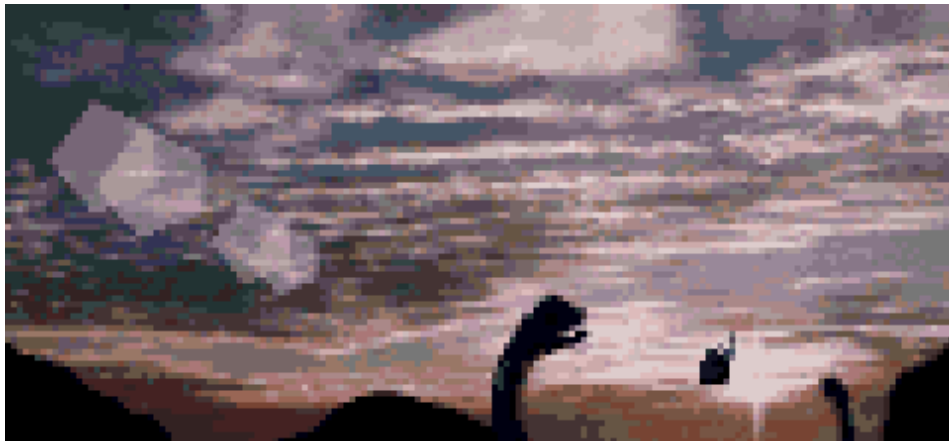
"I have to admit to be genuinely gobsmacked by Jurassic Park. It's hardly state-of-the-art stuff, but it's nice to see companies like Ocean bothering to put a bit of time and effort into their products. Jurassic Park is nice to look at, and great to play. I found the 3D sections to be especially nerve-wracking after a late-night working and plying my tortured body with ultra-espresso coffee. It really is hold-onto-your-pants time when a Velociraptor leaps round a corner just as you come towards the end of a stage."

87% - CU Amiga (February 1994)



Our odyssey wraps up in a final dalliance with early 3D reconnaissance, wherein we are guided by Hammond and co.

via walkie-talkie, and a heli-chopper decampment to the shore, depicted through a tiny FMV animation.



While the latter had been witnessed in the arcades as far back as 1983, this technology didn't really find its feet in the home until 1992 with the advent of Night Trap and The 7th Guest. Another notable 'ahead of the curve' moment then for the Amiga.

Spanning four disks plus another to switch between PAL and NTSC regions, JP is an expansive game that will take many hours to complete. To its detriment, this imposes oodles of disk swapping and thumb-twiddling as you flick back and forth between terminal viewing, and the two game modes. An HD installation option would have alleviated this drawback, only it's snatched away from your volition by the game's implementation of floppy-based copy protection.

Like the movie, strip away the initial intoxication of the ground-breaking special effects and sheer magnitude of the implausibly corporal beasts, and the game loses much of its appeal. What remains is a protracted traipse through the luscious vegetation of Isla Nublar, and an inferior Doom clone.



Be that as it may, suspend your disbelief and it retains a certain charm of its own, independent to the hyperbole intertwined with Spielberg's dino-peddling crusade. An experience well worth seeking out and savouring for historical curiosity if nothing else, at least until the cracks in the gameplay begin to outweigh your dino-fever blind spot.